

The Ballarat Naturalist

February 2014



December 2013 Excursion – Durham Lead area

The December 2013 excursion on Sunday 8th was an afternoon event and saw members head towards Durham Lead meeting a few extras at Buninyong so 15 arrived at Pioneer Lane where crimson rosellas flew across the road. Jeanette Mitchell escorted us around her property along paths she had mown to make it easier for us to walk. A lot of work had been done to maintain it in a natural state and we were able to walk through Kangaroo Grass observing a number of native flowers and plants.

John recorded a comprehensive list of observations (See p.2, 3) and so only a few of note will be given in this report. One flower that engendered much discussion was the button everlasting. On someone commenting it was a *Helichrysum*, Paul observed that the name had changed and that it is now *Coronidium scorpioides*. This generated a bit of comment and quite a few efforts at pronunciation, spelling and recall as a specimen were passed again.

Being December many anticipated that there would be little flowering but there was plenty to see with *Wahlenbergia*, *Bossiaea*, Onion Orchids, *Goodenia* and more as can be seen from John's list. There were Trailing Shaggy Peas which Jeanette said a week before were covered in flowers. Tiny blue butterflies flitted around adding to the beauty. Next it was through the fence to a nature reserve which went between the property and Peers Lane. Here there were many tree stems on the ground and Blackwood Wattles had seeded everywhere amongst Broad-leaved Peppermints. There were a few flowers on the ground but also some blackberries. In a gully Les found little bracket fungi on a tree trunk and Choughs flying overhead added their melodious calls. Climbing through the fence again it was back to a covered area behind Jeanette's home to glimpse an Owlet Nightjar which had taken residence above a light and could just be seen hiding in the framework. Afternoon tea was taken on the Pioneer Lane before heading to the two hectare Durham Lead Public Recrea-

tion Reserve down Quartz Lane. Wallabies bounded away as we made our way through different species of grass observing common Bird Orchids, spent Sun Orchids with seed pods amongst Scentbark, Broad and Narrow-leaved Peppermints and Manna Gums. There was a delicate Necklace Fern in an overhanging rocky area but no sign of the Tiger Orchids that had been there ten days previously.

We then went to the Buninyong Gardens to share a picnic evening meal together before the day wound up. We were pleasantly surprised to have seen so many plants still flowering in December.

Thanks to John for organising and reconnoitring the excursion and to Jeanette for leading us around her property and the adjacent reserve. John has provided a comprehensive list of species observed at the different locations. Also Elspeth supplied photos –see p.6.

Peter Dalman

Scientific name	Common name	Site*
<i>Acacia aculeatissima</i>	Thin-leaf Wattle	1,2
<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	Blackwood	1,2
<i>Acacia verticillata</i>	Prickly Moses	1,2
<i>Acaena echinata</i>	Sheep's burr	2
<i>Acaena novae-zelandiae</i>	Bidgee widgee	2
* <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet Vernal-grass	1,2
<i>Arthropodium strictum</i>	Chocolate lily	1,2
<i>Asplenium flabellifolium</i>	Necklace Fern	1
<i>Astroloma humifusum</i>	Cranberry heath	2
<i>Austrostipa</i> sp	Spear Grass	1
<i>Bossiaea prostrata</i>	Creeping Bossiaea	2
* <i>Briza maxima</i>	Large quaking grass	1,2
* <i>Bromus diandrus</i>	Great Brome	1
<i>Brunonia australis</i>	Blue Pincushion	1,2
<i>Burchardia umbellata</i>	Milkmaids	2
<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>	Sweet Bursaria	1
<i>Cassinia arcuata</i>	Chinese Scrub	1,2
<i>Chiloglottis valida</i>	Common Bird-orchid	1
* <i>Cynosurus echinatus</i>	Rough Dog's-tail	1
<i>Dillwynia glaberrima</i>	Smooth Parrot-pea	2
<i>Drosera peltata</i> var. <i>peltata</i>	Pale Sundew	2

<i>Eucalyptus aromaphloia</i>	Scentbark	1,2
<i>Eucalyptus dives</i>	Broad-leaved Peppermint	
<i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i>	Messmate	1
<i>Eucalyptus radiata</i> subsp. <i>radiata</i>	Narrow-leaved Peppermint	1,2
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> ssp <i>viminalis</i>	Manna gum	1
<i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i>	Cherry Ballarat	1,2
<i>Gompholobium huegelii</i>	Common Wedge-pea	2
<i>Gonocarpus tetragynus</i>	Common Raspwort	1,2
<i>Goodenia lanata</i>	Trailing Goodenia	1,2
<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	Purple Coral-pea	1,2
<i>Helichrysum scorpioides</i>	Button Everlasting	2
<i>Hypericum gramineum</i>	Small St.John's Wort	2
<i>Indigofera australis</i>	Austral Indigo	2
<i>Leptospermum myrsinoides</i>	Silky tea-tree	2
<i>Leucopogon virgatus</i>	Common Beard-heath	2
<i>Lissanthe strigosa</i>	Peach Heath	2
<i>Luzula meridionalis</i>	Woodrush	1,2
<i>Microtis unifolia</i>	Common onion orchid	2
<i>Oxalis perennans</i>	Yellow wood sorrel	2
<i>Ozothamnus obcordatus</i>	Grey Everlasting	2
<i>Pimelea humilis</i>	Common rice flower	2
* <i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort	1,2
<i>Plantago varia</i>	Variable Plantain	2
<i>Poa spp</i>	Tussock grass	1,2
<i>Podolobium procumbens</i>	Trailing Shaggy-pea	2
<i>Poranthera microphylla</i>	Small poranthera	1,2
<i>Pteridium esculentum</i>	Austral Bracken	1, 2
<i>Pultenaea gunnii</i>	Golden bush pea	2
<i>Rytidosperma sp.</i>	Wallaby-grass	1,2
<i>Senecio spp</i>	Fireweed	1,2
<i>Solanum laciniatum</i>	Large Kangaroo-apple	2
<i>Stellaria pungens</i>	Prickly Starwort	1,2
<i>Stylidium sp2</i>	Grass Trigger-plant	1,2
<i>Tetralthea ciliata</i>	Pink bells	2
* <i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse	1,2
<i>Veronica gracilis</i>	Slender speedwell	1
<i>Wahlenbergia sp</i>	Bluebell	1,2

*Sites: 1. Durham Lead Recreation Reserve 2. Pioneer Lane
For photos taken by Elspeth on excursion -see p 6.

Christmas Gathering: Mon16th Dec 2013

Following an enjoyable gathering last year at Rosebank Retirement Village, Bill Murphy again offered to host one to end 2013. Seventeen of us met in the pleasant dining room to share a meal. After cooking our meats on the very convenient adjacent barbeques we shared our salads and desserts with appropriate beverages. It was lovely to be seated at a nicely set, festive table inside, untroubled by slightly cool weather and catching up with each other's Christmas plans. Thank you Bill, and we hope everybody did enjoy their festive season.

Clare Dalman

The Temoq: Ultimate Field Naturalists of the Malaysian Rainforest

Speaker: Peter Laird

With the title *The Temoq: Ultimate Field Naturalists of the Malaysian Rainforest* for our December speaker Peter Laird, I don't think any of us had a clear idea what we were in for! Peter explained that he had been working as an anthropologist in the Malaysian lowland rain forest for 40 years. Over this period he has spent months at a time immersed in the culture of the jungle-dwelling Temoq Orang Asli (Indigenous) communities to uncover the nature of their society, their beliefs and rituals. His particular study has been the Shamanic practices that are an integral part of the life of the Temoq. Shamanic spirit journey performances which usually last an entire night include hundreds of natural species that are either used (e.g., palms) or invited (e.g., hornbills) to participate in the healing process. The gaits and sounds of natural species, including wind-whipped palms and dipterocarps, are encoded in the drum music that accompanies the Shaman's spirit journey. Based on day-to-day practical activities, and extensive observation of the natural world, Temoq ritual embeds the practical and empirical in a deeper spiritual appreciation of the living earth.

Photo: A slow loris: One of many Shamanic familiar spirits.



Taking photographs of wild species, collecting plants, experiencing nature through documentaries, keeping diaries, learning scientific nomenclatures for classifying plants and animals, visiting special habitats and audio recording sound scapes are in principle no different from the Temoq fascination with the natural world and the way they transform this experience into ritual imagery, carvings and models, and music. The natural world is an inexhaustible source for the human imagination in almost all human cultures.



Photo: Ritual cleansing beneath purifying 'rain' inside a symbolic 'tropical rain forest' bathing platform.

Peter illustrated his talk with over 120 slides and several audio recordings of significant human activities and natural species which are a part of Temoq daily life. The talk concluded with slides showing the extensive destruction of the Temoq forest habitat by logging and oil palm plantations. Peter's talk about a life so different to our own was certainly an eye opener which illustrates how these forest-dwelling people have managed to live their lives with their environment providing all their spiritual and physical needs without the horrific impacts we have inflicted on our environment in our urge for "development and progress."

Jane Marriott

Feb Excursion notice

Eucalypts north of Ballarat - John Gregurke

John will be taking us on a trip, generally north of Ballarat so that he can show us 19 of the 25 local Eucalyptus. Our tour will begin in Warrenheip and wind its way north to finish at Clunes.

(If you wish to join any of the excursions at a later time than the 9.30 start you can make prior arrangements to contact a committee member on the excursion who has a mobile phone as to the location of the group at a particular time.)

Photos taken by Elspeth at December Excursion



Photo: Plant identification on Jean's property

Photo right: Entrance to Gong Reservoir, Buninyong



Photo: Members at Durham Lead Reserve

Excerpts for Club Meeting Minutes Dec 20134

Opening and Apologies.

Attendance: 25 members and friends.

Apologies: C Hall, K Hammond, D Brooke, A and C Baulch.

Reports Treasurer's Report: Opening balance \$6156.68

Income \$74.61 Expenses \$71.39

General Business

Syllabus 2014: May meeting, Friday 2nd & excursion, Sunday 4th clash with SEANA camp at Marysville. Most of Committee will be at Marysville. If meeting and/or excursion to be held, volunteer/s needed to organise them

Jane Marriott will advertise any speakers on the topic of climate change to wider audience.

The Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Victoria has released the *State of the Environment Report*. It is available at www.ces.vic.gov.au

Show & Tell/Reports.

Margaret Thomas: At Nerrina. Eastern Spinebill feeding on honey-suckle flowers. Little Raven and Blackbird have produced young.

Claire Dalman: Two Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos flying over Wendouree fire station.

Nina Netherway: White-faced Heron, Swingers Lane near cemetery.

Jane Marriott: 30-40 Little Ravens cavorting around eucalypts and in air at Broomfield. Feeding on Cup Moth caterpillars.

John Mildren: Australian Spotted Crake on raft of vegetation at north end of Fairyland, Lake Wendouree.

Jeanette Mitchell: Owlet Nightjar roosting outside back door at Durham Lead for second consecutive year.

Paul Norquay: At Mt Egerton. Nankeen Kestrel raising chicks. Flock of 20 White-winged Choughs.

Bill Murphy: 1000 Duck Orchids flowering at Victoria Dam, Enfield Forest near Smythesdale.

John Gregurke: Olive-backed Oriole seen building nest at Boar Gully on 6 October had hatched one chick which was nearly ready to leave the nest on 16 November. At Lake Wendouree on 1.12.2013 38 cygnets counted.

CALENDAR 2013

February

- Fri 7 *Eucalypt identification* - John Gregurke, club member
Sun 9 Eucalypts north of Ballarat - John Gregurke
Tues 25 Committee meeting at Fran's

March

- Fri 7 *AGM Members' images - Seascapes*
Sun 9 *Ballarat district* - Club members

Committee

President Peter Dalman
Vice –President..... Fran Hanrahan
Secretary Carol Hall
Treasurer Les Hanrahan

Elspeth Swan
Claire Dalman
John Gregurke

John Mildren
Val Hocking

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Meetings are held at the Primary Industries Training Centre, cnr Gillies and Gregory Sts, on the first Friday of the month at 7.30pm..

Excursions: Leave from the carpark at the Primary Industries Training Centre, cnr Gillies and Gregory Sts. at 9.30 am, unless otherwise advised.

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